

To whom it may concern,

My comments are regarding not the NFL, but the MLB blackout rules. In short, they are archaic remnants of a bygone television era that make no sense and only serve to prevent fans from acquiring the games they would like to watch through any sort of reasonable manner.

MLB blackout rules are as follows: if an area is considered part of a team's television territory, games featuring that team are not available for live viewing. It must be watched on a local broadcast network. This restriction applies whether the team is playing at home or away. The issue that arises is that what is considered "local" defies logic. The entire state of Iowa is considered as local territory for six different teams. Hence, up to 1/3 of all major league baseball games may be blacked out for the state of Iowa. For reference, the closest team to my own location is approximately a 3.5 hour drive away. I also challenge anyone to find all six game broadcasts on local cable television anywhere in the state of Iowa without purchasing a satellite television subscription. These rules also apply to MLB's own online streaming service MLB.tv.

As a Minnesota Twins fan, I wish to watch Minnesota twins games. However, the Twins are shown on FSNorth. Ames, Iowa receives only FSMidwest, showing Cardinals and Royals games. I am also prevented from streaming the games online them using MLB's own service. Hence, the only legal option I have to watch the team is to pay for satellite service to acquire the non-local channel FSNorth – so I have to pay a third party not affiliated with major league baseball in order to watch the major league baseball games I want. If a car dealership required that I pay a third party to negotiate with the dealership in order to purchase a vehicle that I wished, I would reasonably go to another dealer – that system would not make sense, and it would be not worth my time. Yet since major league baseball is the only corporation providing the product I would like, I have no other option. This is why I am requesting the FCC to make changes to the major league baseball blackout policy.

As I stated initially, the current blackout system is an incoherent mess and needs major changes to adapt to the modern state of television broadcasting. Major league baseball has a great product – I wish they would let me purchase it.

Thank you

Robert C. Foster

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